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Haig says 'faceless' staffers did him in

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Alexander Haig yesterday attributed his ouster as secretary of state to "a range of motivations," including betrayal by "faceless people" on the White House staff.

But he declined to blame William Clark, his former top State Department aide who became White House national security adviser, for forcing his resignation last June.

Haig's remarks came in the first of a three-part interview broadcast on CBS' "Morning News."

His resignation was accepted June 25 after he disagreed with the president's decision to impose sanctions on European firms sending U.S.-licensed goods to the Soviet Union for use in a natural gas pipeline project.

He was not present at the meeting when the decision was made, he said, perhaps because "some people do not like confrontational meetings, and that's very understandable." He said it is possible Clark was saving the president from a session "in which I would have clearly taken the other side."

Haig also referred yesterday to a flap over a memo he purportedly gave to the White House just hours after the inauguration that spelled out broad powers for him in his role as secretary of state.

Haig said he and National Security Adviser Richard Allen, "in coordination with [Defense Secretary Caspar] Cap Weinberger and [CIA Director] Bill Casey, spent three weeks prior to the inauguration" and developed "with some contention as is always the case, a reflection of the consensus" of the scope of Haig's authority and duties on foreign policy.

"It was when it left that forum that all the controversy developed," said Haig, saying as far as he knew it was never presented directly to Reagan but rather to "what I refer to as a group of faceless staff people."

He also said he was "somehow, portrayed to the American press by faceless people" as a person bent on trying "to seize control of the levers of government."

Reagan has refused to discuss publicly the reasons for Haig's departure. Haig said there is "always a range of motivations when these things happen."

Asked how he thought his absence has affected U.S. policy, he replied: "If I thought it would serve a useful purpose to answer frankly your question, then I'd be shouting it to the rooftops. But I don't think it would."